

**Nominee's Name: Last, First, Middle:**  
COOPER, ANITA R.

**Nomination Category:**  
Administrative/Support; GS1-10/WG & Pay Band equivalents

**Address at Least One of the Following Factors in the Justification Below.**

**Contributions to NOAA and NOAA Fisheries programs that resulted in:**

**For Non-Management:**

- Enhanced economic viability of commercial and/or recreational fishing;
- Enhanced public appreciation for the mission of the agency;
- Enhanced safety or health of NOAA Fisheries workforce;
- Enhanced morale of the NOAA Fisheries workforce or inspired excellence in its members;
- Enhanced stewardship of NOAA Fisheries protected/managed species/associated habitats;
- Improved accuracy, reliability, or reproducibility of scientific results;
- **Improved customer service;**
- **Increased efficiency and/or reduced cost of operations;**
- Improved equal employment opportunity or diversity in NOAA Fisheries;
- Strengthened ties to other NOAA elements or NOAA Fisheries constituents; and/or
- Brought unusual credit to NOAA Fisheries or members of its workforce.

**For Management:**

- Demonstrated exceptional leadership, development of the workforce, and/or program management.

Ms. Efficiency. That basically sums up our Administrative Assistant, Anita Cooper. Anita brought years of experience with her when she joined the Resource Enhancement and Utilization Division (REUT) Division at the Northwest Fisheries Science Center in 2003. Anita's exceptional organizational skills allow her to perform her duties efficiently and in a timely manner. In addition, when she is out of the office, I can always find what I need because of the logical systems she uses to organize her work. She cleaned up our publication files and created a reference file to help locate publications of interest. Our supply cabinet is always stocked – I haven't had to request items because everything is there that I seem to need.

Over the past year, Anita's skills have come into play in a very important way when I was asked to serve as Division Coordinator for the Environmental Conservation (EC) Division. Part of my role was to help improve administrative efficiency and processes. Immediately, Anita's skills came to mind. I knew she would be able to contribute greatly to the EC effort.

Beginning in January 2007, I started assigning projects to Anita involving EC Division. The first task was to create time and attendance folders for each employee and file away many T&A records. Completing this task then allowed her to attack her next assignment – leave audits, which had not been performed in years. Over time, many leave errors had occurred and were never corrected. Performing the leave audits was crucial to being able to reconcile the errors. More than half of the EC staff had one or more leave errors on record. Anita painstakingly traced the source of the errors and reported the corrections needed to eliminate the errors. This project took many, many hours to complete, but during the entire time Anita was working on it, she always completed her REUT-related obligations also.

Anita's knowledge of time and attendance and travel regulations is vast. The Operations, Management, and Information (OMI) Division requested Anita's services to train a newly hired administrative assistant on time and attendance. She gladly accepted and devoted several hours to the training. This request said a lot about Anita's knowledge and experience, and I hope she realized what a compliment it was.

Besides processing travel requests and vouchers quickly, she helps out with an important part of the budget relating to travel. We are required to maintain up-to-date commitments in MARS (the NOAA budget tracking system). Travel commitments begin as estimates so they need to be updated once actual expenses are known. Anita corrects REUT and EC travel commitments after actual costs are calculated. This is a very important function because the Center's budget analyst relies on up-to-date commitments to determine the status of the Center's budget at any given time.

## 2007 NOAA Fisheries Employee of the Year Nomination

### Narrative (continued)

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Anita's organizational skills are also appreciated at our field station at Manchester. She regularly assists Manchester's administrative assistant with filing, travel, invoices, and general organization of the office. She was instrumental in helping conduct the 2007 accountable property inventory at Manchester, ensuring it was completed by the deadline.

Working with Anita is enjoyable because she is knowledgeable, needs very little guidance, and bottom line, is very, very good at what she does. Over the years she has trained us well, making sure that we all follow proper procedures, whether it involves travel, leave slips, etc. That's why I am saddened knowing that she plans to retire at the end of August. She will leave a big hole to fill in our administrative office. Because she has us all pretty well trained, we should be able to bring in a new assistant and help that person to provide the same level of efficient service as Anita has provided us over the years. But we will definitely miss her.